

## **Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland**

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<b>Submitted by:</b>	Active Queenslanders Industry Alliance
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## ACTIVE QUEENSLANDERS INDUSTRY ALLIANCE

### RESPONSE TO PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO VOLUNTEERING IN QUEENSLAND

26 FEBRUARY 2024

Active Queenslanders Industry Alliance (AQIA) is a not-for-profit organisation funded by the Queensland Government to be the Industry Skills Advisor for fitness, sport and recreation. Our focus is on the skills and training needs and workforce issues for the industry's paid workforce as well as volunteers.

In 2024, AQIA released the ten-year *2024-2034 Active Industry Workforce Plan* that included a number of strategies to support the volunteer workforces for sport and recreation clubs.

The following feedback has been provided through various consultations for reports and projects undertaken by AQIA that have aimed to support volunteers.

#### Value of Volunteering

- Benefits to an individual – provides sense of purpose and achievement and boosts mental health well being. Creates sense of belonging and connection to their communities.
- Benefits to the community – provides social cohesion and builds stronger communities.
- Economic benefits to State
- Provides skills development and career development/opportunities into paid work

#### Volunteer recruitment and retention

- Loss and lack of volunteers, specifically at the board/committee level, post COVID. This is at the state and club level and has resulted in the burnout of the volunteers.
- Need for volunteers resources to support their roles and committee structures.
- Volunteer structures are a barrier to volunteer recruitment. Having clear roles, committees and delegations has proven to engage and retain more volunteers but clubs are not aware of or are unsure of how to implement these best practice systems.
- There is immense opportunity of the 2032 Olympic Games to increase volunteer engagement. This is broader than just committee members and includes coaches and officials. As with the "You For 2032" athlete program, the sports believe there needs to be a volunteer pathway running alongside. Not every pathway to the Olympics is as an athlete. Sports need coaches, managers, umpires/judges and administrators and these pathways need to be recognised and supported.
- Historically clubs have engaged third parties to develop volunteer strategies and systems. This has resulted in the wheel being reinvented many times.



- Volunteer pathways need to be encouraged and rewarded.
- There needs to be a statewide volunteer recruitment campaign to communicate a clear and consistent message plus give prospective volunteers a single point to find information on becoming a volunteer.

### **Barriers and Challenges**

- Attraction, recruitment and retention of volunteers
- Attraction of younger cohort
- Burnout
- Less people volunteering

### **Solutions and Opportunities**

- The solution is collaboration between governments, peak bodies, organisations and clubs to reduce duplication of effort in supporting volunteers.
- A statewide volunteer strategy, particularly leading into the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Volunteers who are engaged now will have a number of years to gain skills and experience to be ready for the Games. This will be beneficial for roles such as Volunteer Coordinators, Leaders and Managers who can lead and support teams of volunteers for the event. It can also be a form of recognition for their efforts and participation in the lead up to the Games.
- The greatest opportunity identified by the sports is the expected increase in participation leading into and beyond 2032. Other opportunities relate to resources needed to support this increased participation.
- A collaborative, multisport approach is needed to improve efficiency of sport and recreation places, spaces and resources. The need for an increased volunteer workforce will also be needed to support the growth in participation. To enable and drive this change the leaders of sport will need to grow their skills and work together.
- **AQIA is interested in hosting a sport and recreation volunteer portal as a coordination point for volunteer services and tasks as well as resource sharing between sport and recreation organisations. Please contact us directly to pursue this opportunity.**

Approved by and submitted on behalf of Active Queenslanders Industry Alliance.

**Phil Reeves**  
Executive Chair

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